

In the 108th Congress, I worked with the chairman and ranking member of the Indian Affairs Committee, Senator Campbell and Senator INOUE, in crafting this apology resolution. I also reached out to the Native tribes as this bill was being formed, and I continue to receive helpful and supportive feedback from them. The resolution I submitted this week, S.J. Res. 15, is identical to the version that was approved unanimously by the Indian Affairs Committee last year. I ask that my colleagues in this Chamber, and those in the House of Representatives, join in support of this important resolution.

THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OF 1915-1923

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, this is in observance of the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide where atrocities were committed against the Armenian people of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. In April 1915, the Ottoman government embarked upon the systematic decimation of its civilian Armenian population. The Armenian genocide was centrally planned and administered against the entire Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian people were subjected to deportation, expropriation, abduction, torture, massacre, and starvation. The great bulk of the Armenian population was forcibly removed from Armenia and Anatolia to Syria, where the vast majority was sent into the desert to die of thirst and hunger.

Large numbers of Armenians were methodically massacred throughout the Ottoman Empire. Women and children were abducted and horribly abused. After only a little more than a year of calm at the end of WWI, the atrocities were renewed between 1920 and 1923, and the remaining Armenians were subjected to further massacres and expulsions. In 1915, 33 years before the UN Genocide Convention was adopted, the Armenian Genocide was condemned by the international community as a crime against humanity.

In 1923, the people of the region overthrew the Ottoman government and established modern day Turkey. Since its establishment, the Republic of Turkey has disputed the tragic suffering inflicted on the Armenian people during this period. Sadly, it is estimated that 1.5 million Armenians perished between 1915 and 1923.

Affirming the truth about the Armenian genocide has become an issue of international significance. The recurrence of genocide in the twentieth century has made the recognition of the criminal mistreatment of the Armenians by Turkey all the more a compelling obligation for the international community. It is a testament to the perseverance and determination of the Armenian people that they were able to overcome one of the most egregious acts in history. I support this important annual commemoration of a hor-

rible chapter of history so that it is never repeated again. Congress should continue to show support for Armenia and their struggle to set the historical record straight on this tragedy.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, we solemnly remember the men and women who perished in the Armenian genocide 90 years ago. A million and a half Armenians were systematically massacred at the hands of the Ottoman Empire and more than 500,000 fled their homeland.

When the Armenian genocide occurred from 1915 to 1923, the international community lacked a name for such atrocities. In January 1951, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide entered into force to affirm the international commitment to prevent genocide and protect basic human decency. Today, we have the words to describe this evil, and we have an obligation to prevent it. But we must also have the will to act.

During the Holocaust, and later in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda, the world has seen the crimes of ethnic cleansing and genocide recur again and again. Too often, the will to stop atrocities has been lacking, or far too late in coming. Today, as we read report after report detailing the horrific plight of the people of Darfur, Sudan, we must muster the will and the sense of urgency required to save lives.

The international community has made the first steps, but it has a long way to go in punishing and, especially, preventing genocide. As we move forward, we must learn the lessons of Armenia's genocide. We cannot be misled by the rhetorical veils of murderous leaders, thrown up to disguise the agenda at hand. We cannot respond to evidence of methodical, brutal violence by wringing our hands and waiting for some definitive proof that these events qualify as genocide. Enforcing a collective, international commitment to prevent and stop genocides from occurring is imperative. We owe the victims of the Armenian genocide this commitment.

This is why we must remember the Armenian genocide. To forget it is to enable more genocides and ethnic cleansing to occur. We must honor its victims by reaffirming our resolve to not let it happen again.

SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH FAIRNESS ACT OF 2005

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. President, of the 27 million working uninsured, 63 percent are working in firms with fewer than 100 employees. It is crucial that we develop a comprehensive plan to remedy the problem of the working uninsured. For this reason I support legislation that would allow for the creation of association health plans, which would allow small businesses to band together to purchase health insurance for their employees.

Because of the current structure of the health care industry, too many

small business owners and their employees do not have access to affordable health insurance. When I talk to small business owners as I travel the State, I have found that most of them want to provide this benefit because it not only helps provide the uninsured with coverage but it also helps small businesses retain good employees.

A recent Census Bureau report says slightly more than 45 million Americans now lack health coverage. While Minnesota is out front in tackling the issue of the uninsured, with uninsured in my State at about 7 percent, I still believe that providing affordable access to health care is a critically important national interest, that there are no silver bullet solutions, and so we need as many tools to fix this problem as possible. According to Kaiser Family Foundation, employer-based health insurance has decreased markedly from covering 66 percent of the non-elderly in 2000 to 62 percent by 2003. The Census Bureau says the drop-off in employer health coverage occurred in the small business sector, largely in firms with fewer than 25 employees. It's no coincidence that these events are taking place as the cost of insurance continues to skyrocket double-digit increases year after year, pricing more and more small firms out of the market.

I want to thank the chairwoman of the Small Business Committee, Senator SNOWE, for her strong leadership and sponsorship of S. 406, The Small Business Health Fairness Act of 2005. I also want to thank my very good friend and colleague, Senator JIM TALENT of Missouri, who has long championed this issue in the same thoughtful and forward looking way that he is renowned for in tackling all important public policy issues in which he gets engaged. I look forward to working with members of the committee to enact this legislation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN MEMORY OF EDWARD MOSKAL

• Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I honor the life and legacy of Edward J. Moskal.

Edward Moskal was a giant in the Polish-American community. He was President of the Polish American Congress and the Polish National Alliance. These are empowering organizations—rooted in heritage, history and philanthropy. Their members are humanitarians and patriots—dedicated to Polish history and culture, and to strengthening the historic links between America and Poland. Because of Ed Moskal's leadership, these organizations have flourished.

The Polish American Congress and the Polish National Alliance were created during one of the darkest periods in Polish history. We know that the history of Poland has, at times, been a melancholy one. Every king, kaiser, czar or comrade who ever wanted to